

Guess Again

BY ROYAL BROWN.

If at First You Don't Succeed, Try Changing the Tactics.

SCHUYLER DE WITT met Judy Pierce at a junior prom during his days at Harvard. The diplomatic service is rather the thing these days, and Sky, with an eye toward it, had specialized in modern languages, but it was the oldest and most universal of all that he made use of when he and Judy were first engaged.

"I've said Sky's eyes to Judy; she has an idea I'm going to like you a whole lot!"

"I dare you to!" answered Judy's eyes.

As a De Witt of New York, a certain position at Harvard was insured. He was good to look upon and he had a certain inbred audacity that was not without charm.

What he thought he needed he went and took. Or tried to, anyway.

Even the proudest, seeing her home, when the junior prom was done was not denied him. The journey from Cambridge to Marlborough street, Boston, completed so far as he was concerned that process known as falling in love. The dim intimacy of the room, the perfume of the snuggled into the fur of her wrap, a celestial warmth, an elusive, intoxicating fragrance—by such things as these was his downfall accelerated.

He had been in taxis with pretty girls before. And there had been moments when he had been—well, audacious.

Now he sat tense, and almost tongued.

"I'm going to call," he announced at her door.

"Oh," said she cordially.

"Sky," he demanded him, promptly.

"Let me see . . . sometime the latter part of next week?"

"Last of next week?" he exploded.

"Are you going to be awfully busy then?" she asked concernedly. "If you are, why any time—"

"Are you going to be home tomorrow?"

"Oh, I've a thousand things to do. I'm afraid—"

Yet in the end she had relented. "If you want to chance my being in at 5, I'll offer you tea," she conceded.

It had happened the same way with his tea—afterwards he had so Sky had his tea—an innocuous beverage into which Judy must have poured some of herself as she served it.

Anyway, Sky was never quite the same now.

Once he had been free, white and 22. The world lay before him. He was to have a summer in Europe and perhaps a year at Oxford, to top off Harvard. After that he was to enter the diplomatic service. The idea had suited him perfectly. That is, that is, he met Judy. From that moment his freedom of choice was gone.

In June Sky forswore diplomacy as a career and snappened up a chance to sell bonds.

"But you Boston?" demanded his astonished face. A wide acquaintance in the best asset in the bond-selling business and you know hardly anybody in Boston."

But to Sky Boston was indeed the hub of the universe. When Sky picked up the topmost book after Stewart's departure, he had no intention of more than scanning a page or so. But it was 10 o'clock when he finally put it down.

"Meantime," he said, "I'm engaged by the way. Not that it matters. But I'm going to be here only a few days more. Consider the weather and other such preliminaries disposed of, we'll see you Saturday."

"Quite right," said Sky. "These will do for a start. I'm ever so much obliged.

"I never thought of that—but I'm sure, but what would you right?"

"As Judy's fingers, feminine to their pretty tips, went unconsciously to her hair, he paused and depressed.

"As beautiful as yours," he assured her. "It's all right, by the way. You need have no concern."

"I haven't. Not the slightest. Not for you."

"Perhaps for Reggie, then. But to resume. The young man of the future will pause. It will say, 'Beautiful hair, such and such the color of this girl's cheek are apt to denote a C-minus intellect. The race will degenerate. Back up, old man, go into reverse—'

"You mean," he gasped, "that you are thinking of asking Miss Sweet to marry you?"

"She is exactly the type of woman who would be good for the good of the race," explained Stewart. "Her fine inheritance—genetic, that is—is shown in the strength of her features and in her vigor and independence of mind. But, as Macdougal says, the few qualities turn men from such women."

"The perfect pattern of the heroine of love stories of the future."

"How," murmured Sky, "did Macdougal guess it?" Then aloud:

"Perhaps she may have stumbled on this new biology you speak of," suggested Sky. "If she hasn't, you must pass on, with a smile on your right, 'have you been saying to Judy? Oh, have no compunction, sir. I'm Leila Judy and I went to school together, shared the same room and all our secrets. You all know your past and your present—'

"Are you about to foretell my future?" demanded Sky.

"I might," she assured him. "A dark-haired woman is about to interest herself in you—"

"Really," Stewart's face suddenly lit up. "Several books I'd be glad to loan you. It may be many moments. It is believed that a man's genetic inheritance determines his final worth. If his ancestors' were C-minus, I get you. Bring in the books any time. I expect to have a lot of time to devote to self-improvement now on."

"I'll get them now," promised Stewart, departing.

"There are others you must see," he suggested. "The room where she would have, I mean."

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